of the Centre are present research relevance, proper utilization of scientists and associated manpower, avoidance of duplication of research efforts and strengthening of identified centres for strategic and applied reseach.

Drug pricing policy

1970. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of controlled and control-free drugs and branded and non-branded drugs;

(b) the existing policy on pricing of each category of drugs;

(c) whether proposals have been received by Government for imposing trade margins on each category of drugs both for wholesale and retail; and

(d) if so, the details and reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) As per the present Pharma Pricing Policy, the 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed/revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95. These drugs have been kept under price control on the basis of criteria mentioned in 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', announced in September, 1994.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The NPPA monitors the prices of medicines as per monthly Retail Audit Reports of ORG-IMS Research Pvt. Ltd. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

Based on the recommendations of the Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (Pharmaceuticals) and the Task Force

under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pronab Sen, Principal Advisor, Planning Commission as well as feedback received from other stakeholders the Government have formulated a Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 (Part-A-excluding pricing) which has been circulated to various departments/stakeholders seeking their comments (including imposing of trade margins).

The 1st meeting of the Pharmaceutical Advisory Forum, was held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister (C&F&S) on 11.2.2006 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. Various issues contained in the Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 (Part A) were discussed. Based on these discussions and comments received from various stakeholders, the Government is likely to announce the new policy shortly.

Closure of fertilizer units

1971. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received suggestions/ recommendations to close down certain chemical fertilizer production units;

(b) if so, the authority from which the said suggestions/ recommendations have been received;

(c) the name of units which are proposed to be closed down; and

(d) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The closure proposals of sick fertilizers Public Sector Undertakings have been approved by the Cabinet.

(c) It has been decided to close down the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd.; Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. excepting its Jodhpur Mining Organisation which has been demerged into a new company i.e. FCI Aravalli Gypsum and Minerals India Ltd.; and Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Ltd.